

PARLEYINGS WITH CERTAIN PEOPLE

OF IMPORTANCE IN THEIR 'DAY

TO WIT BERNARD DE MANDEVILLE,
 DANIEL BARTOLI,
 CHRISTOPHER SMART,
 GEORGE BUBB DODINGTON,
 FRANCIS FURINI,
 GERARD DE LAIRESSE,
AND CHARLES AVISON

INTRODUCED BY

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN APOLLO AND THE FATES ,

CONCLUDED BY

ANOTHER BETWEEN JOHN FUST AND HIS FRIENDS

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Absens assentem auditque videtque

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APOLLO AND THE FATES

A PROLOGUE

APOLLO AND THE FATES

(Hymn in Mercurium, v 559 Eumenides, vv 693 4, 697 5
Alceſtis, vv 12 33)

APOLLO (*From above*)

FI ME at my footfall, Parnassus ! Apollo,
Breaking a-blaze on thy topmost peak,
Burns thence, down to the depths—dread hollow—
Haunt of the Dire Ones Haste ! They wreak
Wrath on Admetus whose respite I seek

THE FATES (*Below Darkness*)

Diagonwise couched in the womb of our Mother,
Coiled at thy nourishing heart's core, Night !
Dominant Dreads, we, one by the other,

Deal to each mortal his dole of light
On earth—the upper, the glad, the bright

CLOTHO

Even so thus from my loaded spindle

Plucking a pinch of the fleece, lo, “Birth”

Brays from my bronze lip life I kindle

I ook, 'tis a man ! go, measure on earth

The minute thy portion, whatever its worth !

LACHESIS

Woe-puifled, weal-prankt,—if it speed, if it linger,—

Life's substance and show are determined by me,

Who, meting out, mixing with sure thumb and finger,

Lead lock the due length is all smoothness and

glee,

All tangle and grief ? Take the lot, my decree !

AIROPOS

—Which I make an end of the smooth as the tangled
My shears cut asunder each snap shrieks “One more
Mortal makes sport for us Moirai who dangled
The puppet grotesquely till earth’s solid floor
Proved firm he fell through, lost in Nought as before”

CLOTHO

I spin thee a thread Live, Admetus ! Produce him !

LACHESIS

Go,—brave, wise, good, happy ! Now chequer the
thread !
He is slaved for, yet loved by a god I unloose him
A goddess-sent plague He has conquered, is wed,
Men crown him, he stands at the height,—

AIROPOS

He is

APOLLO (*Entering Light*)

“Dead?”

Nay, swart spinsters! So I surmise you

Making and marring the fortunes of Man?

Huddling—no marvel, your enemy eyes you—

Head by head bat-like, blots under the ban
Of daylight earth’s blessing since time began!

THE FATES

Back to thy blest earth, prying Apollo!

Shaft upon shaft transpire with thy beams
Earth to the centre,—space but this hollow

Hewn out of Night’s heart, where mystery seems
Mewed from day’s malice wake earth from her dreams

APOLLO

Croncs, ’tis your dusk selves I startle from slumber

Day’s god deposes you—queens Night-crowned!
—Plying your trade in a world ye encumber,

Fashioning Man's web of life—spun, wound,
Left the length ye allot till a clip strews the ground !

Behold I bid truce to your doleful amusement—
Annulled by a sunbeam !

THE FATES

Boy, are not we peers ?

APOLLO

You with the spindle grant birth whose inducement
But yours—with the niggardly digits—endears
To mankind chance and change, good and evil ? Your
shears

AIROPOS

Ay, mine end the conflict so much is no fable
We spin, draw to length, cut asunder what then ?
So it was, and so is, and so shall be at able
To alter life's law for ephemeral men ?

APOLLO

Nor able nor willing To threescore and ten

Extend but the years of Admetus ! Disaster

O'ertook me, and, banished by Zeus, I became
A servant to one who forbore me though master

True lovers were we Discontinue your game,
Let him live whom I loved, then hate on, all the same !

THE FATES

And what if we granted—law-flouter, use-trampler—

His life at the suit of an upstart ? Judge, thou—
Of joy were it fuller, of span because ample ?

For love's sake, not hate's, end Admetus—ay, now—
Not a gray hair on head, nor a wrinkle on brow !

For, boy, tis illusion from thee comes a glimmer

Transforming to beauty life blank at the best
Withdraw—and how looks life at worst, when to shimmer

Succeeds the sure shade, and Man's lot frowns—con-
fessed

Meie blackness chance brightened ? Whereof shall
attest

The truth this same mortal, the darling thou stylest,
Whom love would advantage,—eke out, day by day,
A life which 'tis solely thyself reconcilest

Thy friend to endure,—life with hope take away
• Hope's gleam from Admetus, he spurns it For, say—

What's infancy ? Ignorance, idleness, mischief
Youth ripens to arrogance, foolishness, greed
Age—impotence, churlishness, rancour call *this* chief
Of boons for thy loved one ? Much rather bid speed
Our function, let live whom thou hatest indeed !

Persuade thee, bight boy-thing ! Our eld be in-
structive !

APOLLO

And certes youth owns the experience of age
 Ye hold then, grave seniors, my beams are productive
 —They solely—of good that's mere semblance, engage
 Man's eye—gilding evil, Man's true heritage?

THE FATES

So, even so! From without,—at due distance
 If viewed,—set a-sparkle, reflecting thy rays,—
 Life mimics the sun but, withdraw such assistance,
 The counterfeit goes, the reality stays—
 An ice-ball disguised as a fire orb

APOLLO

What craze

Possesses the fool then whose fancy conceits him
 As happy?

A PROLOGUE

15

THE FATES

Man happy?

APOLLO

If otherwise—solve

This doubt which besets me! What friend ever greets
him

Except with “Live long as the seasons revolve,”
Not “Death to thee straightway”? Your doctrines absolve

Such hailing from hatred yet Man should know best

He talks it, and glibly, as life were a load,

Man fain would be rid of when put to the test,

He whines “Let it lie, leave me trudging the road
That is rugged so far, but methinks ”

THE FATES

Ay, 'tis owed

To that glamour of thine, he bethinks him "Once past
 The stony, some patch, nay, a smoothness of sward
 Awaits my tired foot life turns easy at last"—
 Thy laigess so lures him, he looks for reward
 Of the labour and sorrow

APOLLO

It seems, then—debailed
 Of illusion—(I needs must acknowledge the plea)
 Man desponds and despairs Yet,—still further to
 draw
 Due profit from counsel,—suppose there should be
 Some power in himself, some compensative law
 By virtue of which, independently

THE FATES

Faugh !

Strength hid in the weakling '

What bowl-shape hast there,

Thus laughingly proffered ? A gift to our shine ?

Thanks—worsted in argument ! Not so ? Declare

Its purpose '

APOLLO

I proffer earth's product, not mine

Taste, try, and approve Man's invention of—WINE '

THE FAIRIES

We feeding suck honeycombs

APOLLO

Sustenance meagre '

Such fare breeds the fumes that show all things amiss

Quaff wine,—how the spirits rise nimble and eager,

Unscale the dim eyes ! To Man's cup grant one kiss—

Of your lip, then allow—no enchantment like this '

CLOTHO

Unhook wings, unhood brows ! Dostth hearken ?

LACHESIS

I listen

I see—smell the food these fond mortals prefer

To our feast, the bee's bounty !

AIROPOS

The thing leaps ! But—glisten

Its best, I withstand it—unless all concur

In adventure so novel

APOLLO

Ye drink ?

THE FATES

We demur^r

APOIIO

Sweet Trine, be indulgent nor scout the contrivance
Of Man—Bacchus-prompted ! The juice, I uphold,
Illuminates gloom without sunny connivance,
Turns fear into hope and makes cowardice bold —
Touching all that is leadlike in life turns it gold !

THE FAIRIES

Faith foolish as false !

APOILO

But essay it, soft sisters !

Then mock as ye may Lift the chalice to lip !
Good thou next—and thou ! Seems the web, to you
twisters
Of life's yarn, so worthless ?

CLOTHO

Who guessed that one sip
Would impart such a lightness of limb ?

IRCHESIS

I could skip

In a trice from the pied to the plain in my woof !

What parts each from either ? A hair's breadth, no
inch

Once learn the right method of stepping aloof,

Though on black next foot falls, firm I fix it, nor
flinch,

—Such my trust white succeeds !

AIROPOS

One could live—at a pinch !

APOLIO

What, beldames ? Earth's yield, by Man's skill, can effect

Such a cure of sick sense that ye spy the relation
Of evil to good ? But think deeper, correct

Blare sight more convincingly still ! Take your station
Beside me, drain dregs ! Now for edification !

Whose gift have ye gulped ? Thank not me but my
brother,

Blithe Bacchus, our youngest of godships 'Twas he
Found all boons to all men, by one god or other

Already conceded, so judged there must be
New guerdon to grace the new advent, you see !

Else how would a claim to Man's homage arise ?

The plan lay arranged of his mixed woe and weal,
So disposed—such Zeus' will—with design to make wise

The witless—that false things were mingled with real,
Good with bad such the lot whereto law set the seal

Now, human of instinct—since Semele's son,

Yet minded divinely—since fathered by Zeus,
With nought Bacchus tampered, undid not things done,

Owne wisdom anteior, would spare wont and use,
Yet change—without shock to old rule—introduce

Regard how your cavern from crag-tip to base

Frowns sheer, height and depth adamantine, one death
I rouse with a beam the whole rampart, displace

No splinter—yet see how my flambeau, beneath
And above, bids this gem wink, that crystal unsheathe

Withdraw beam—disclosure once more Night forbids you
Of spangle and sparkle—Day's chance-gift, surmised
Rock's permanent birthright my potency rids you

No longer of darkness, yet light—recognized—
Proves darkness a mask day lives on though disguised

If Bacchus by wine's aid avail so to fluster

Your sense, that life's fact grows from adverse and
thwart

To helpful and kindly by means of a cluster—

Mere hand-squeeze, earth's nature sublimed by Man's
art—

Shall Bacchus claim thanks wherein Zeus has no
part?

Zeus—wisdom anterior? No, maids, be admonished!

If morn's touch at base worked such wonders, much
more

Had noontide in absolute glory astonished

Your den, filled a-top to o'erflowing I pour
No such mad confusion 'Tis Man's to explore

Up and down, inch by inch, with the tape his
reason

No torch, it suffices—held deftly and straight
Eyes, purblind at first, feel their way in due season,
Accept good with bad, till unseemly debate
Turns concord—despair, acquiescence in fate

Who works this but Zeus ? Aie not instinct and impulse,
 Not concept and incept his work through Man's soul
 On Man's sense ? Just as wane ere it reach brain must
 brim pulse,

Zeus' flash stings the mind that speeds body to goal,
 Bids pause at no part but press on, reach the whole

For petty and poor is the part ye envisage

When—(quaff away, cummeis ')—ye view, last and
 first,

As evil Man's earthly existence Come ! *Is* age,

Is infancy—manhood—so uninterspersed

With good—some faint sprinkle ?

CLOTHO

I'd speak if I durst.

APOLLO

Draughts dregward loose tongue-tie

LACHESIS

I'd see, did no web

Set eyes somehow winking'

APOLLO

Drains-deep lies then purge

—True collyrium !

ATROPOS

Words, suiging at high-tide, soon ebb

From starved ears

APOLLO

Drink but down to the source, they resurge

Join hands ! Yours and yours too ! A dance or a
dirge ?

CHORUS

Quashed be our quarrel ! Souly and smilingly,

Bare and gowned, bleached limbs and browned,

Drive we a dance, three and one, reconcilingly,

Thanks to the cup where dissension is drowned,
Defeat proves triumphant and slavery crowned

Infancy ? What if the rose-streak of morning
Pale and depart in a passion of tears ?

Once to have hoped is no matter for scorning !

Love once—e'en love's disappointment endears !
A minute's success pays the failure of years

Manhood—the actual ? Nay, praise the potential !
(Bound upon bound, foot it around !)

What *is* ? No, what *may* be—sing ! that's Man's essential !

(Ramp, tramp, stamp and compound
Fancy with fact—the lost secret is found !)

Age ? Why, fear ends there the contest concluded,
Man *did* live his life, *did* escape from the fray
Not scratchless but unscathed, he somehow eluded

Each blow fortune dealt him, and conquers to-day
To-morrow—new chance and fresh strength,—might we
say ?

Laud then Man's life—no defeat but a triumph !

(Explosion from the earth's centre)

CLOTHO

Ha, loose hands !

LACHESIS

I reel in a swoond

AIROPOS

Horror yawns under me, while from on high—humph !

Lightnings astound, thunders resound,

Vault-roof reverberates, groans the ground ! *(Silence)*

APOLLO

I acknowledge

THE FATES

Hence, trickster ! Straight sobered are we !
 The portent assues 'twas our tongue spoke the truth,
 Not thine While the vapour encompassed us three
 We conceived and bore knowledge—a bantling uncouth,
 Old brains shudder back from so—take it, rash youth !
 Lick the lump into shape till a city comes !

APOLLO

I hear

THE FATES

Dumb music, dead eloquence ! Say it, or sing !
 What was quickened in us and thee also ?

APOLLO

I fear.

THE FATES

Half female, half male—go, ambiguous thing !

While we speak—perchance sputter—pick up what we
fling !

Known yet ignored, nor divined nor unguessed,

Such is Man's law of life Do we strive to declare
What is ill, what is good in our spinning ? Worst,
best,

Change hues of a sudden now here and now there
Flits the sign which decides all about yet no-where

'Tis willed so,—that Man's life be lived, first to last,

Up and down, through and through,—not in portions,
forsooth,

To pick and to choose from Our shuttles fly fast,

Weave living, not life sole and whole as age—youth,
So death completes living, shows life in its truth

Man learningly lives till death helps him—no lore !

It is doom and must be Dost submit ?

APOLLO

I assent—

Concede but Admetus ! So much if no more

Of my prayer grant as peace-pledge ! Be gracious,
though, blent,

Good and ill, love and hate streak your life-gift !

THE FATES

Content !

Such boon we accord in due measure Life's term

We lengthen should any be moved for love's sake
To forego life's fulfilment, renounce in the germ

Fruit mature—bliss or woe—either infinite Take
Or leave thy friend's lot on his head be the stake !

APOLLO

On mine, griesly gammers ! Admetus, I know thee !

Thou prizest the right these unwittingly give

Thy subjects to rush, pay obedience they owe thee !

Importunate one with another they strive

For the glory to die that their king may survive

Friends rush and who first in all Pheræ appears

But thy father to serve as thy substitute ?

CLOTHO

Bah !

APOLLO

Ye wince ? Then his mother, well-stricken in years

Advances her claim—or his wife—

LACHESIS

Tra-la la !

APOLLO AND THE FATES

APOLLO

But he spurns the exchange, rather dies !

ATROPOS

Ha, ha, ha !

(*Apollo ascends Darkness*)

I

WITH BERNARD DE MANDEVILLE

WITH BERNARD DE MANDEVILLE

I

AY, this same midnight, by this chain of mine
Come and review thy counsels art thou still
Staunch to their teaching?—not as fools opine
Its purport might be, but as subtler skill
Could, through turbidity, the loaded line
Of logic casting, sound deep, deeper, till
It touched a quietude and reached a shine
And recognized harmoniously combine
Evil with good, and hailed truth's triumph—thine,
Sage dead 'long since, Bernard de Mandeville '

II

Only, 'tis no fresh knowledge that I crave,
Fuller truth yet, new gainings from the grave ,
Here we alive must needs deal fairly, turn
To what account Man may Man's portion, learn
Man's proper play with truth in part, before
Entrusted with the whole I ask no more
Than smiling witness that I do my best
With doubtful doctrine afterwards the rest '
So, silent face me while I think and speak '
A full disclosure? Such would outrage law
Law deals the same with soul and body seek
Full truth my soul may, when some babe, I saw
A new-born weakling, starts up strong—not weak—
Man every whit, absolved from earning awe,
Pride, rapture, if the soul attains to wreak
Its will on flesh, at last can thrust, lift, draw,

As mind bids muscle—mind which long has striven,
Painfully urging body's impotence
To effort whereby—once law's banner driven,
Life's rule abolished—body might disperse
With infancy's probation, straight be given
—Not by foiled darings, fond attempts back-driven,
Fine faults of growth, brave sins which saint when shriven—
To stand full-statued in magnificence

III

No—as with body so deals law with soul
That's stung to strength through weakness, strives for good
Through evil,—earth its race ground, heaven its goal,
Presumably—so far I understood
Thy teaching long ago—But what means this
—Objected by a mouth which yesterday
Was magisterial in antithesis
To half the truths we hold, or trust we may,

Right fettered here by wrong, but leaves life's yoke —
 Death should loose man from—flesh laid, past release ? ' "

IV

Bernard de Mandeville, confute for me
 This parlous friend who captured or set free
 Thunderbolts at his pleasure, yet would draw
 Back, panic-stricken by some puny straw
 Thy gold-rimmed amber-headed cane had whisked
 Out of his pathway if the object risked
 Encounter, 'scaped thy kick from buckled shoe !
 As when folks heard thee in old days pooh-pooh
 Addison's tye-wig preachment, grant this friend—
 (Whose groan I hear, with guffaugh at the end
 Disposing of mock-melancholy) —grant
 His bilious mood one potion, ministrant
 Of homely wisdom, healthy wit ! For, hear !
 " With power and will, let preference appear

PARLEYINGS WITH

By intervention ever and aye, help good
When evil's mastery is understood
In some plain outrage, and triumphant wrong
Tramples weak right to nothingness nay, long
Ere such sad consummation bring despair
To right's adherents, ah, what help it were
If wrong lay strangled in the birth—each head
Of the hatched monster promptly crushed, instead
Of spared to gather venom ! We require
No great experience that the inch-long worm,
Free of our heel, would grow to vomit fire,
And one day plague the world in dragon form
So should wrong merely peep abroad to meet
Wrong's due quietus, leave our world's way safe
For honest walking ”

Sage, once more repeat
Instruction ! 'Tis a sore to soothe not chafe

Ah, Fabulist, what luck, could I contrive
To coax from thee another "Gumblin' Hive" !
My friend himself wrote fables short and sweet
Ask him—"Suppose the Gardener of Man's ground
Plants for a purpose, side by side with good,
Evil—(and that He does so—look around !
What does the field show ?)—were it understood
That purposely the noxious plant was found
Vexing the virtuous, poison close to food,
If, at first stealing-forth of life in stalk
And leaflet-promise, quick His spud should baulk
Evil from budding foliage, bearing fruit ?
Such timely treatment of the offending root
Might strike the simple as wise husbandry,
But swift sure extirpation scarce would suit
Shrewder observers Seed once sown thrives why
Frustrate its product, miss the quality
Which sower binds himself to count upon ?

Had seed fulfilled the destined purpose, gone
Unhindered up to harvest—what know I
But proof were gained that every growth of good
Sprang consequent on evil's neighbourhood ? ”
So said your shrewdness true—so did not say
That other sort of theorists who held
Mere unintelligence prepared the way
For either seed's upsprouting you repelled
Their notion that both kinds could sow themselves
True ' but admit 'tis understanding delves
And drops each germ, what else but folly thwarts
The doer's settled purpose ? Let the sage
Concede a use to evil, though there starts
Full many a burgeon thence, to disengage
With thumb and finger lest it spoil the yield
Too much of good's main tribute ! But our main
Tough-tendoned mandrake-monster—purge the field
Of him for once and all ? It follows plain

Who set him there to grow beholds revealed
 His primal law His ordinance proves vain
 And what be seems a king who cannot reign,
 But to drop sceptre valid arm should wield ?

VI

“ Still there’s a parable ’—etoits my friend—

“ Shows agriculture with a difference ’

What of the crop and weeds which solely blend

Because, once planted, none may pluck them thence ?

The Gardener contrived thus ? Vain pretence ’

An enemy it was who unawares

Ruined the wheat by interspersing tares

Where’s our desolated forethought ? Where’s

Knowledge, where power and will in evidence ?

’Tis Man’s-play merely ! Craft foils rectitude,

Malignity defeats beneficence

And grant, at very last of all, the feud

'Twixt good and evil ends, strange thoughts intrude
Though good be garnered safely and good's foe
Bundled for burning Thoughts steal "Even so—
Why giant tares leave to thus o'er-top, o'ertower
Their field-mate, boast the stalk and flaunt the flower,
Triumph one sunny minute? Knowledge, power
And will thus worked? Man's fancy makes the fault!
Man, with the narrow mind, must cram inside
His finite God's infinitude,—earth's vault
He bids compise the heavenly far and wide,
Since Man may claim a right to understand
What passes understanding So, succinct
And trimly set in order, to be scanned
' And scrutinised, lo—the divine lies linked
Fast to the human, free to move as moves
Its proper match awhile they keep the grooves,
Discreetly side by side together pace,
Till sudden comes a stumble incident

Likely enough to Man's weak-footed race,
And he discovers—wings in rudiment,
Such as he boasts, which full grown, free-distent
Would lift him skyward, fail of flight while pent
Within humanity's restricted space
Abjure each fond attempt to represent
The formless, the illimitable ! Trace
No outline, try no hint of human face
Or form or hand ! ”

VII

Friend, here's a tracing meant
To help a guess at truth you never knew
Bend but those eyes now, using mind's eye too,
And note—sufficient for all purposes—
The ground-plan —map you long have yearned for—yes,
Made out in markings—more what artist can ?—
Goethe's Estate in Weimar,—just a plan !

A is the House, and B the Garden-gate,
 And C the Grass-plot—you've the whole estate
 Letter by letter, down to Y the Pond,
 And Z the Pig-stye Do you look beyond
 The algebraic signs, and captious say
 "Is A the House? But where's the Roof to A,
 Where's Door, where's Window? Needs must House
 have such ' "

Av, that were folly Why so very much
 More foolish than our mortal purblind way
 Of seeking in the symbol no mere point
 To guide our gaze through what were else inane,
 But things—then solid selves? "Is, joint by joint,
 Orion man-like,—as these dots explain
 His constellation? Flesh composed of suns—
 How can such be?" exclaim the simple ones
 Look through the sign to the thing signified—
 Shown nowise, point by point at best descried,

Each an orb's topmost sparkle all beside
 Its shine is shadow turn the orb one jot—
 Up flies the new flash to reveal twas not
 The whole sphere late flamboyant in your ken !

VIII

“What need of symbolizing? Fittier men
 Would take on tongue facts—few and faint and fair,
 Still facts not fancies quite enough they are,
 That Power, that Knowledge, and that Will,—add
 then

Immensity, Eternity these jar
 Nowise with our permitted thought and speech
 Why human attributes ?”

A myth may teach
 Only, who better would expound it thus
 Must be Euripides not Æschylus

IX

Boundingly up through Night's wall dense and dark,
Embattled crags and clouds, out-broke the Sun
Above the conscious earth, and one by one
Her heights and depths absorbed to the last spark
His fluid glory, from the far fine ridge
Of mountain-granite which, transformed to gold,
Laughed first the thanks back, to the vale's dusk fold
On fold of vapour-swathing, like a budge
Shattered beneath some giant's stamp Night wist
Her work done and betook herself in mist
To marsh and hollow there to bide her time
Blindly in acquiescence Everywhere
Did earth acknowledge Sun's embrace sublime
Thrilling her to the heart of things since there
No ome ran liquid, no spar branched anew,
No arrowy crystal gleamed, but straightway grew

Glad through the inrush—glad not more not less
Than, 'neath his gaze, forest and wilderness,
Hill, dale, land, sea, the whole vast stretch and spread,
The universal world of creatures bred
By Sun's munificence, alike gave praise—
All creatures but one only gaze for gaze,
Joyless and thankless, who—all scowling can—
Protests against the innumerable praises ? Man,
Sullen and silent

Stand thou forth then, state
Thy wrong, thou sole aggrieved—disconsolate—
While every beast, bird, reptile, insect, gay
And glad acknowledges the bounteous day !

Man speaks now “What avails Sun's earth-felt thrill
To me ? Sun penetrates the ore, the plant—
They feel and grow perchance with subtler skill

He interfuses flæ, worm, brute, until
Each favoured object pays life's ministrant
By pressing, in obedience to his will,
Up to completion of the task prescribed,
So stands and stays a type Myself imbibed
Such influence also, stood and stand complete—
The perfect Man,—head, body, hands and feet,
True to the pattern but does that suffice ?
How of my superadded mind which needs
—Not to be, simply, but to do, and pleads
For—more than knowledge that by some device
Sun quickens matter mind is nobly fain
To realize the marvel, make—for sense
As mind—the unscen visible, condense
—Myself—Sun's all-pervading influence
So as to serve the needs of mind, explain
What now perplexes Let the oak increase
His corrugated strength on strength, the palm

Lift joint by joint her fan-fruit, bul_ and balm,—
Let the coiled serpent bask in bloated peace,—
The eagle, like some skyey derelict,
Drift in the blue, suspended, glorying,—
The lion lord it by the desert-spring,—
What know or care they of the power which pricked
Nothingness to perfection? I, instead,
When all-developed still am found a thing
All-incomplete for what though flesh had force
Transcending theirs—hands able to unring
The tightened snake's coil, eyes that could outcourse
The eagle's soaring, voice whereat the king
Of carnage couched dis-crowned? Mind seeks to see,
Touch, understand, by mind inside of me,
The outside mind—whose quickening I attain
To recognize—I only All in vain
Would mind address itself to render plain
The nature of the essence Drag what lurks

Behind the operation—that which works
Latently everywhere by outward proof—
Drag that mind forth to face mine? No! aloof
I solely crave that one of all the beams
Which do Sun's work in darkness, at my will
Should operate—myself for once have skill
To realize the energy which streams
Flooding the universe Above, around,
Beneath—why mocks that mind my own thus found
Simply of service, when the world grows dark,
To half surmise—were Sun's use understood,
I might demonstrate him supplying food,
Warmth, life, no less the while? To grant one spark
Myself may deal with—make it thaw my blood
And prompt my steps, were truer to the mark
Of mind's requirement than a half-surmise
That somehow secretly is operant
A power all matter feels, mind only tries

To comprehend ' Once more—no idle vaunt
' Man comprehends the Sun's self ' ' Mysteries
At source why probe into? Enough display,
Make demonstrable, how, by night as day,
Earth's centre and sky's outspan, all's informed
Equally by Sun's efflux '—source from whence
It just one spark I drew, full evidence
Were mine of fire ineffably enthroned—
Sun's self made palpable to Man ' '

~

Thus moaned
Man till Prometheus helped him,—as we learn,—
Offered an artifice whereby he drew
Sun's rays into a focus,—plain and true,
The very Sun in little made fire burn
And henceforth do Man service—glass-conglobed
Though to a pin-point circle—all the same

Comprising the Sun's elf, but Sun disrobed
Of that else-unconceived essential flame
Borne by no naked sight Shall mind's eye strive
Achingly to companion as it may
The supersubtle effluence, and contrive
To follow beam and beam upon their way
Hand-breadth by hand-breadth, till sense faint—confessed
Frustrate, eluded by unknown unguessed
Infinitude of action ? Idle quest !
Rather ask aid from optics Sense, descry
The spectrum—mind, infer immensity !
Little ? In little, light, warmth, life are blessed—
Which, in the large, who sees to bless ? Not I
More than yourself so, good my friend, keep still
Trustful with—me ? with thee, sage Mandeville !

II

WITH DANIEL BARTOLI